

Suggestions to encourage **TALKING** during storytime

Dialogic Reading / Picture Walk

In short, dialogic reading is having a dialog with the child/ren as you read. Ask them open ended-questions such as “what do you notice,” “what is happening here,” and “what do you think will happen next” rather than asking yes/no questions. This way you will encourage them to use practice using words.

Picture walks are similar to dialogic reading, but rather than reading the whole book and asking questions while you do, picture walks usually focus on wordless picture books or just a few illustrations, and don't necessitate reading the entire book.

[Example of dialogic reading](#)

[Example of picture walk:](#)

[Handout about picture walks for parents:](#)

Use wordless picture books

Wordless picture books are a great way to encourage conversation during storytime! Use them along with dialogic reading/picture walks and let the kids tell YOU what is happening.

Describe a “Thing”

Put some objects in a bag and pull them out one at a time (or let a child pull one out). Ask the children to help you describe it. For instance, pull out a toy horse and ask them what it is. If they say horse, you can scaffold their vocabulary by adding more adjectives—“Yes, it's a soft brown horse! What else do you notice about it?” Is it hard and plastic? Soft and squishy? Help them to describe it to you, being careful to supplement what they say rather than giving them the answers right away.

Quick Conversations

As children and parents arrive for storytime, this is a perfect chance to have quick conversations with the kids. Ask them how they are today, what they were doing before storytime, what their favorite toy is, what they think the storytime theme will be today (make sure there are hints so they can guess successfully)—whatever you'd like to talk about! Be sure to leave them time to process the question and formulate a response—little ones are still making connections in their brains and verbalizing can take a few seconds longer for them.

Call and Response / Predictable Books

Use books that either have a repetitive call and response that is predictable for the kids and allows them to be successful at guessing what to say next. *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin Jr., for instance, encourages the kids to shout “Boom Boom!” together. *Lunch* by Denise Fleming give a hint about which food item will appear on the next page, and kids have fun guessing what it will be.

Use Non-fiction Books

Don't forget about non-fiction books during storytime! If the text is too dense, don't be afraid to only use select pages or pictures, and encourage conversation (dialogic reading) about them.